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THE
ORPHAN OF CHINA.
A
TRAGEDY.



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A
TRAGEDY.

Translated from the FRENCH of
Arouet
M. DE VOLTAIRE. *K*

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L O N D O N:

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Dramatis Personæ.

Cengiz-Kan, Emperor of the *Tartars*.

Osar,
Osman, } Officers of the *Tartars*.

Zamti, Mandarin and Priest.

Idame, Wife to *Zamti*.

Affeli, Friend to *Idame*,

Etan, Friend to *Zamti*.



The SCENE is in a palace of the Mandarines, joining to the imperial palace, in the city of Cambalu, now Peking.

THE
ORPHAN OF CHINA.
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TRAGEDY.

ACT I. SCENE I.

IDAME, ASSELI.

IDAME.

CAN there, in this sad day of desolation,
In this dire hour of carnage and destruction,
When ev'n this palace, open to the Tartars,
Falls with the world beneath barbarian hands,
Can there amid this heap of public horrors,
Remain for me fresh cause of private woe?

AJ. Ah! who, alas! among the common loss
Feel not the pressure of their own misfortunes?
Who sends not up to heav'n her feeble cries
To save a son, a father, or a husband?
Within this pale, still stranger to the foe,
Whether the king withdrew from public view
The weak defenceless ministers of peace;
Th' interpreters of law, the holy priests,
Decrepit age, and cradled infancy,
And we the trembling band of fearful women,
Whom yet the hand of slaughter has not reach'd,
Know not, alas! to what enormous lengths
The haughty victor may extend his rage.
We hear the thunder roll, and tempests roar:
The storm hangs o'er us, and we dread its fall.

Ida. O fortune! O thou more than earthly pow'r!—
Know'st thou, my Asseli, beneath what hand
Once pow'rful Cathay's bleeding empire groans.
The hand, that thus oppresses all the world?

Aff. They call the cruel tyrant king of kings :
 Fierce Gengis-Kan, whose dread exploits in war
 Have made proud Asia one vast sepulchre.
 Ostar his officer, to murder train'd,
 With sword and fire already seeks the palace,
 And conquer'd Cathay to new masters yields.
 This city, sometime sovereign of the world,
 Lies drown'd in blood ; and all its hundred streets,
 Floating in gore, proclaim the dismal tale.

Ida. Know'st thou, this tyrant of the subject earth,
 This fell destroyer of our helpless state,
 This dread of kings imbrued in royal blood.
 Is a rough Scythian, bred to war and arms ;
 A warrior, wandering in those savage deserts,
 Where angry heaven lours with endless storms.
 'Tis he, who mad for pow'r above his fellows,
 Was hither driven by persecution's rage,
 And whom thou lately sawest in this great city,
 Begging protection at the palace gates.
 The king of kings, this victor's Temugin.

Aff. How ! Temugin ? who paid his vows to thee !
 That fugitive ! whose homage and whose love
 Appear'd an insult to your angry parents !
 Is't he, draws after him his train of kings,
 He, whose bare name strikes terror to mankind !

Ida. The same, my Affeli ; his haughty courage,
 His future greatness shone upon his visage.
 All, I confess, seem'd poor and mean to him ;
 And even, while he begg'd our court's assistance,
 Unknown, a fugitive, he seem'd commanding.
 He lov'd me ; and perhaps my foolish heart
 Approv'd his love : perhaps it was my pride
 To tame this lion shackled in my chains,
 To our soft forms to bend his savage grandeur,
 To polish with our virtues his rough soul,
 And make him one day worthy to be rank'd
 Among the number of our citizens.
 He would have serv'd the state he has destroy'd ;
 And he we scorn'd has brought on all our woes.
 Thou know'st, the fierceness of our jealous people,

The

The ancient honours of our arts and laws,
 Our holy faith, thrice sanctified and pure,
 And the long glories of a hundred ages,
 All, all forbad, with one united voice,
 A base alliance with the barb'rous nations.
 A holier hymen has engaged my vows,
 And virtuous Zamti merits all my love.
 Who would have thought, in those blest hours of peace,
 That a scorn'd Scythian thus should lord it o'er us?
 This, this alarms me; I refused his hand,
 And am the wife and partner of another.
 He comes in blood, the world at his command
 To give him means of vengeance.—O strange fate!
 O heaven! can it be, that this great people
 Should like base flocks of cattle sent to slaughter,
 Fall, without fight, beneath a Scythian's sword!

Ass The Coreans, it is said, have troops assembled:
 Yet we know nothing but by vague report,
 And are abandon'd to the victor's rage.

Ida O how uncertainty increases grief!
 Who knows how far our miseries extend?
 Whether amid the palace of his fathers
 The emperor has refuge found, or help;
 Whether the queen by th' enemy is seiz'd;
 Or, if of one or both the hour is come:
 Too sad reward, alas! of wedded love.
 The hapless infant to our care consign'd
 Again excites my fear and my compassion.
 My Zamti too with rash step treads the palace;
 Haply, respect of his most holy office
 May touch these savages. 'Tis said, the ruffians,
 Bred to the trade of death, have yet preserv'd
 Some notion of a GOD: so much ev'n nature,
 In barb'rous climes, untaught and unimprov'd,
 Proclaims to all, RELIGION and a GOD.
 Yet, ah! I fondly dream of their respect,
 I talk of hope, but am a slave to fear.
 O misery!

S C E N E

S C E N E II.

Idame, Zamti, Affeli.

Ida. O say, unhappy Zamti,
Is then our slavery, our woe determined?
Ah? what hast thou beheld?

Zam. The height of horrors.
Our fortune's fix'd and China is no more.
Beneath the stranger sword all falls. Ah! what avail'd
A life of virtue? Fair peace smil'd in vain;
In vain our laws gave pattern to the world;
Grey wisdom dies by brutal violence.
I saw the savage troop of northern ruffians
Making their way in blood, o'er slaughter'd heaps,
Carrying the sword and fire. In crowds they fought
The sacred mansion of our hapless monarch.
He with majestic brow expected death,
And held within his arms his fainting queen.
Those of their children, whose increasing valour
Began to grow with years, whose little arms,
Could wield a sword, were all already fall'n.
Round them clung those, whose tender infancy
Had nought but cries and tears for their defence.
While they press'd round him, and embrac'd his knees,
I by a secret path approach'd the place,
And view'd with horror the unhappy father.
I saw those fiends, those monsters of the desert,
Lifting the murd'rous steel against our king,
And thro' the palace drag with bloody hands
The father, children, and their dying mother.
While all was fury, havock, death, and plunder,
The wretched monarch turn'd on me his eyes,
And thus address'd me in the sacred tongue
Unknown to th' conqu'ring Tartar and the people,
O save at least from death my youngest son!
Think, if I did not swear I would preserve him,
O think, how loudly duty call'd upon me.
I felt my fainting spirits new reviv'd;

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A T R A G E D Y.

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Hither I flew. The bloody ravishers
Stopt not my passage : whether hideous joy,
Intent on plunder, turn'd their eyes aside ;
Whether this badge of my most rev'rend office,
This symbol of the God that I adore,
Struck their fierce souls with awe ; or heav'n itself
Determin'd to preserve this royal infant,
Athwart their watchful eyes dim mists suffus'd,
Dazled their sight, and mollified their rage.

Ida. Yes, we will save him. Be this royal charge
With our dear child away conveyed, and bred.
Despair not, but with haste prepare our flight :
Let Etan have the care of our depart,
And fly tow'nds Corea ; to the ocean side,
Where the sea girds this mournful universe.
The earth has desarts and wild savages
Away then with these infants, while the foe
Invades not yet this sanctify'd asylum,
Come, time is precious, and complaint in vain.

Zam. Alas ! has then the race of kings no refuge !—
The troops from Corea linger in their march.
Mean while destruction rages in our walls :
Seize we, if possible the auspicious moment
To place in surety this our precious charge.

S C E N E I I I.

Zamti, Idame, Affeli, Etan.

Zam. Why thus, my Etan, frightened and amazed ?

Ida. Fly, fly this place abandon'd to the Scythian.

Et. You are observ'd, and flight impossible.

The pale's encircled by a cruel guard,
Forming around the frighted multitude
A dreadful fence thick-set with pikes and darts.
The conqu'ror spoke, and slavery heard his voice :
The people motionless with fear and horror,
Sink in despair, now murder's reeking sword
With impious rage has drank our emp'ror's blood.

Zam. Is he then dead ?

Ida. O heavenly pow'rs, the emperor !

Et.

Et. Words cannot paint the horrors of the scene.
 His bleeding wife, their children torn and mangled——
 O Gods ! adored on earth ! how shall I speak it ?
 Their sufferings only mov'd the victor's scorn,
 While their poor subjects, fearful to complain,
 Hung down those eyes that spoke their grief too plainly.
 The shameless soldiers on their coward knees
 Resign'd their arms ; when now the conquerors
 Tir'd with the toil of murder, drunk with blood,
 Instead of death pronounc'd our slavery.
 Yet still new woes remain. This Gengis-Kan,
 That leads this swarm from forth the Northern hive,
 This tyrant, born to be the bane of China,
 Here formerly abode, unknown and scorn'd.
 Now all-incens'd, implacable he comes,
 To glut his anger, and revenge his wrongs.
 His savage nation's form'd by other laws
 Than our soft people : fields, and tents, and cars
 Their wonted dwelling, even the wide extent
 Of this vast city would appear confinement.
 No sense have they of our fair arts and laws,
 But mean with barb'rous rage to overturn
 These walls, so long the wonder of the world.

Ida. Too sure the victor comes resolv'd on vengeance.
 In my obscurity I plac'd some hopes ;
 But heav'n, alas ! determin'd to destroy,
 Has scatter'd the kind cloud that late conceal'd us.

Za. Perhaps ev'n yet the Gods will save THE ORPHAN :
 Be his security our only care——
 What means this Tartar here ?

Ida. O shield me, heav'n !

S C E N E IV.

Zamti, Idame, Affeli, Ostar, and Guards.

Ost. Hear, and obey, ye slaves ; there yet remains
 The last and youngest son of all your kings.
 'Tis ye protect him, and your rash compassion
 Preserves an enemy we would destroy.
 I here command you, in the mighty name,

Of the great conqueror of all mankind,
 Give up this infant ; see it quickly brought me.
 If you delay, again within these walls
 Shall havock stalk in blood, and you the first
 Shall fall a sacrifice. Day flies apace ;
 Think, and beware ; before the close of eve,
 If life is precious, see that ye obey.

S C E N E V.

Zamti, Idame, Etan,

Ida. Where will our sorrows end, when ev'ry moment
 Teems with new horrors ; and produces evils,
 Which, till this day of death, th' affrighted soul
 Could ne'er conceive. Alas ! you answer not,
 But sigh in vain to heaven, that oppresses us——
 And must thou, offspring of so many kings !
 Be sacrific'd to please a ruffian soldier ?

Zam. I've promis'd, I have sworn to save his life.

Ida. Ah ! what can your weak help avail him now ?
 Your oaths, your fond endearments, or your promise ?
 We have not ev'n hope left.

Zam. O heav'n ! my Idame,
 And could'st thou then behold this child of kings
 Butcher'd by Scythians ?

Ida. No, the very thought
 Makes my sad eyes run o'er ; and if, alas !
 Our own dear child demanded not my care,
 I would say, death ! my Zamti, since our kings
 Fall by the Scythian, let us not survive them !

Zam. Who, plung'd in misery views death with dread ?
 The guilty fear, the wretched wish for death ;
 The brave defy, and triumph in the face on't ;
 The wise who know that death at last must come,
 Without a shock receive it.

Ida. Why is this ?
 What mean these dreadful words ? upon the ground
 You fix your eyes, your hair stands all an end,
 Your cheek grows pale, and tears are in your eyes :
 My bosom answers yours, feels all its griefs :
 But what resolve you ?

Zam.

Zam. To observe my oath.

Go, wait my coming near the royal infant.

Ida. O, that my cries and prayers could protect him!

SCENE VI.

Zamti, Etan.

Et. Alas! my lord, your pity can't preserve him.
His death alone can save the state from ruin,
The people's safety ask it.

Zam. Yes,——I see

A sacrifice most dreadful must be made.——

Attend me, Etan!——Is your country dear?——

Say, do you own that God of heav'n and earth

Worshipp'd by all our fathers, but unknown

To the rude Bonze, and by these Scythians scorn'd?

Et. Own him? he is my bosom's sole support:
I mourn my country's woes, nor hope redress
But from his power.

Zam. By his sacred name,
By all his power swear, thou'lt ne'er reveal
The secret purpose, which to thy performance
I now commend: swear that thou wilt accomplish
That which the laws, the int'rest of thy country,
My duty and my God by me command thee.

Et. I swear it; and may all our common woes
Be heap'd on me alone, if e'er betraying
Your sacred charge, or faltering in my zeal,
My tongue or hand or heart shall prove unfaithful!

Zam. I must delay no longer.

Et. How! in tears!

Alas! amid so many miseries,
Whence this new cause of grief?

Zam. His fate is fix'd.
The cruel order's giv'n.

Et. Time grows short;
Yet sure this child, which is to you a stranger——

Zam. Stranger! this stranger child! my king a stranger!

Et. His father was indeed our king. Alas!
I know it, and I freeze with horror: speak,
What must I do?

Zam.

Zam. My very looks are watch'd,
And all my steps observ'd; but thou'rt unnotic'd;
Thou know'st the asylum of our sacred charge:
Avail thyself of thine obscurity.

And for a time within the monuments,
Built by our fires, conceal this royal infant.
Thence shall be soon conveyed to Corea's chief
This tender shoot of China's royalty.
Save we at least from these fell murderers
This hapless child, the object of their fears.
Save we our king, and leave the rest to me.

Et. Without this mournful pledge what threatens you?
Say, can you answer all the victor's rage?

Zam. Yes, I can satisfy it.

Et. You, my lord!

Zam. O nature! O tyrannic duty!

Et. How!

Zam. Go, from his cradle take my only son.

Et. Your son!

Zam. Think of the king you ought to save.
Take my son—let his blood—I can no more.

Et. Ah! what do you command me?

Zam. Spare a father,
His miseries, and most of all his weakness.
Oppose not my design, but quick fulfil
The solemn vow thou'lt made.

Et. Alas! you wrung
That rash vow from me. To what dreadful duty
Does the performance bind me? your great soul,
And generous purpose I admire with horror.
But if my friendship——

Zam. No, it must be so.
I am a father; and a father's grief
Hath told me more, much more than thou can'st say,
I've silenc'd blood, do thou bid friendship peace.
Away.

Et. I must obey.

Zam. For pity leave me.

S C E N E VII.

Zamti solus.

I've silenc'd blood!—Ah, most unhappy father!
 That voice, alas! too loudly calls upon me.
 My wife and infant rend my soul with anguish:
 O charm to silence, heav'n! the voice of grief,
 Nor let me know the weakness of my soul.
 Man is too weak, alas! to conquer nature:
 Support him, heaven! and when his cares are vain,
 His drooping virtue with thy grace sustain.

End of the First A C T.

A C T II. S C E N E I.

Zamti solus.

ETAN too long delays his sad return.
 I long, yet fear, to know the deed's dispatch'd;
 I wish, yet dread, his coming. Oh! my son,
 My dear, dear infant! art thou then destroy'd?
 Have they made up this horrid sacrifice?
 I could not to the Scythian's butcher hand
 Myself deliver you. Heav'n give me strength
 To hear the sad success of my attempt,
 And hide the anguish of my tortur'd soul?

S C E N E II.

Zamti, Etan.

Zam. My friend!—I understand—your tears explain it.

Et. Your hapless son——

Zam. Ah! speak of him no more;
 Speak of our monarch's son, the hope o'th' empire.
 Say, is he safe?

Et. The holy monuments
 Of his great ancestors from hostile eyes

His

His life and woes conceal. To you he owes
A life, whose dawn in heaviness comes on:
Too fatal gift perhaps.

Zam. He lives: enough.

O you, my royal masters, to whose shades
My only child I sacrifice, forgive
A father's tears!

Et. Within these conquer'd walls
Your sorrows speak too loudly.

Zam. Oh! my friend,

In what sad mansion shall my grief have vent?
And how shall I sustain the first approach,
Bitter upbraidings, yellings, wild despair,
And imprecations of a furious mother?
Let us at first, if possible, deceive her!

Et. The ruffians, in her absence, took your son,
And to the cruel victors strait convey'd him.
I flew immediately to save, if possible,
Th' endanger'd ORPHAN.

Zam. Tell her, my good Etan,
That we have sav'd the heir of China; tell her,
Our boy is safe; and thus with kind delusion
Win her, if possible, to fond belief.
Alas! that truth so often should be cruel!
Mankind adore it; and it makes them wretched.
Come then, my Etan!—Heav'n! my wife approaches,
And death and madness stare within her eyes.

S C E N E III.

Zamti, Idame.

Ida. What have I seen? Barbarian! is it possible?
Did you command this horrid sacrifice?
Ah! no, I can't believe it; angry heaven
Ne'er fill'd your bosom with such cruelty;
You cannot be more hard and barbarous
Than the rough Tartar. Canst thou weep then, Zamti?

Zam. Ah! weep with me, my Idame; but try
To save your king.

Ida. How! sacrifice my son?

B 2

Zam.

Zam. Such is our hapless lot : but think, dear wife,
That CITIZEN's a holier tie than MOTHER.

Ida. Rules nature then so feebly in your breast ?

Zam. Alas ! too strong ; but weaker than my duty :
I would preserve our child ; but more, much more,
To my unhappy master's blood I owe.

Ida. No, I disclaim this savage strength of soul.
I've seen these walls in ashes, this high throne
O'erturn'd, and wept our monarch's hapless fate :
But by what madness, still more horrible,
Will you bring on a poor wife's death, and shed
The blood of your own child, they don't demand !
Our kings interr'd, and vanish'd into dust,
Are they your gods, and do you dread their thunder ?
And have you sworn to these weak gods intomb'd
To sacrifice your son ? Alas ! my Zamti,
The great and small, the subject and the monarch,
Distinguish'd for a time by idle marks,
Equal by nature, equal by misfortune,
Each bears enough, that bears his own distress.
It is our part amid this gen'ral wreck
To gather up our sad remains.—Good heav'n !
Where had I been, if my credulity
Had fall'n into the net was spread before me ?
If by THE ORPHAN's side I had remained,
My infant-victim would to butcher hands
Have been deliver'd ; I no more a mother,
Had fall'n beneath the knife that kill'd my child.
Thanks to my love, that troubled and unquiet
Call'd me, like instinct, to the fatal cradle !
I found them carrying off my lovely babe,
And with a mother's fury tore him from them.
Barbarian ! ev'n the cruel ravishers
Wanted thy savage firmness. To a slave,
Whose breast with nursing care has long sustain'd
His little life, the precious charge I gave.
Thus have I sav'd from death child and mother.
Nay more, my Zamti, sav'd the unhappy sire.
Zam. How ! is my son then living ?
Ida. Yes, thank heav'n !

Kind

Kind, in thine own despight, to bless thee still.
Repent you of your rashness.

Zam. God of heaven!

Forgive this joy that will not be repress'd,
And for a moment mixes with my grief.
O my dear Idame, his days are few:
In vain you would prolong his life, in vain
Conceal this fatal off'ring. On demand,
If we not render up his forfeit life,
The jealous tyrants soon will be reveng'd;
And all the citizens with us destroy'd
Too sadly shall repay thy cruel care.
Enclos'd by foldiers, there's no refuge left;
And my poor boy, thou fondly striv'st to save,
Cannot be rescued from the hand of slaughter.
He must die.

Ida. Stay! dear Zamti, stay, I charge thee!

Zam. Ah!—he must die.

Ida. Must die! hold, on thy life!

Fear my despair and fury, fear a mother.

Zam. I know no fear but to betray my duty.
Abandon yours; me and my life abandon
To the detested conqu'ror's impious rage.
Go, ask my death of Gengis; go, he'll grant it
Bathe in a husband's blood your hands, and fill
With monstrous deaths this day of parricide.
Horror on horror's head still heap, at once
Betray your GOD, your COUNTRY and your KING.

Ida. My king! what claim have monarchs in the grave?
Owe I my blood a tribute to their ashes?
Or does a subject's duty bind thee more,
Than the strong ties of father and of husband?
Nature and marriage are the first of laws,
The duties, and chief bonds of all mankind:
These laws descend from heaven, the rest are human.
O make me not abhor the blood of kings!—
Yes, save THE ORPHAN from the victor's sword,
But save him not by parricide. O let
His days be bought at any other price,
Far from abandoning, I fly to aid him.

I pity him. O pity thou thyself,
 Pity thy guiltless infant, and O pity
 His poor distracted mother, who doats on thee !
 No more I threaten ; at thy knees I fall.——
 O hapless father, dear though cruel husband,
 For whom I scorn'd, which haply you remember,
 The man whom fortune now has made our master ;
 Grant me the offspring of our purest love ;
 Nor O ! oppose the strong and tender cries
 Of love, that even now shake all your frame !

Zam. Ah ! do not thus abuse thy power o'er me,
 Nor join with nature to oppose my duty.
 O thou too weak of soul ! if you but knew !——

Ida. Yes I am weak ; a mother should be so.
 Yet thou should'st not upbraid my soul of weakness,
 Were I to follow thee to death or torture :
 And if, to glut the bloody victor's rage,
 The mother's murder may redeem the child,
 I'm ready : Idame shall ne'er complain ;
 And her heart beats as nobly as thy own.

Zam. Alas ! I know thy virtues.

S C E N E IV.

Zamti, Idame, Ostar, with Guards.

Ost. Dare ye, slaves,
 Resume the pledge that I commanded from you ?
 Follow them, soldiers, and the child conceal'd
 See they resign. Away your emp'ror comes :
 Here bring the victim to your master's feet.
 Soldiers observe them.

Zam. We'll obey your orders :
 We will resign the infant.

Ida. Never, never.
 No, I'll not yield him up, but with my life.

Ost. Away with that bold woman. Lo, the emperor !
 Let not these captive slaves approach his presence.

S C E N E

S C E N E V.

Gengis, Ostar, Ofman, *Soldiers.*

Geng. Too far they push my right of victory.
Sheath'd be the sword, and slaughter check its course!
And henceforth let the vanquish'd breathe secure!
Terror I sent before me, but bring peace.
The child of kings destroy'd shall glut my rage:
In his blood will I choak the fatal seeds
Of dark conspiracy and bold rebellion,
Which such weak phantoms of a prince inspire.
His fathers are all fallen: he must follow.
Let the kings die, the subjects all shall live.

Cease to destroy these noble monuments,
Respect those sacred prodigies of art,
And let them stand as the rewards of valour.

Cease to commit to flames and desolation
Those learned scrolls, the archives of the laws,
And all those works of genius, you despise.
From error if they sprung, that error's useful;
It makes the people docile and obedient.

Ostar, I destine you to bear my banners
Where the sun rises from his warry bed.

[To one of his followers.]

In conquer'd India, humble in its ruin,
Of my decrees be thou th' interpreter;
While in the west my victor sons shall fly
From Samarcand's proud walls to Tanais' banks.
Away: Ostar remain.

S C E N E VI.

Gengis, Ostar.

Geng. Could'st thou believe
That fate would lift me to this height of glory?
I trample on this throne, and here I reign,
Where late I scarcely durst uplift my eyes:
Here in this palace, this proud city where
Mix'd with the vulgar crowd, and seeking refuge,
I un-

I underwent the scorn, which in distress
 The stranger takes of th' haughty citizen.
 A Scythian they disdain'd, with shame and outrage
 Receiv'd my ill-form'd wishes. Nay, my Ostar,
 A peevish woman here refus'd that hand
 Beneath whose pow'r now trembles all mankind.

Of. Why, now exalted to this height of glory,
 When the whole world lies prostrate at your feet,
 Comes o'er your memory this idle thought?

Geng. My soul, I do confess, was always hurt
 With the affronts my humble fortune suffer'd.
 I never knew but this one thought of anguish,
 And here believ'd my soul would find repose.
 But 'tis not in the splendor of my fortune,
 The pleasure fame, or love, they say bestows,
 I feel an indignation, that's below me;
 And yet methinks, I'd have her know her king,
 Make her look up from baseness, to his glory,
 Whose tenderness her folly turn'd to rage;
 That when she sees the lot she might have shar'd,
 Her fury and despair may give me vengeance.

Of. My ear, my lord, has ever been accusom'd
 To cries of fame and victory; of walls
 O'erturn'd and smoaking at your feet: of love
 And all these tender tales I nothing know.

Geng. No, since the hour my soul was here subdued,
 Since all my fierceness was so poorly conquer'd,
 I guarded my firm heart from the return
 Of that mean softness, which they here call love,
 You, Idame, I own, within this breast
 Mad'st an impression I ne'er knew till then.
 In our rough families of the frozen North
 There is no beauty that enchains the soul,
 Those savage consorts of our hardy labours
 Are barb'rous, rude, robust, and masculine.
 But here a new infection seiz'd my soul,
 Darting from th' eyes of Idame: her words,
 Her looks breath'd tenderness. Her scorn,
 I thank it, nourish'd this my noble fury,
 And her disdain releas'd me from her bonds.

This

This tyrant charm, this sov'reign of the heart
 Would have destroy'd my honour. My whole soul
 Is due to glory. I've subdued the world,
 Instead of wasting in mean love my days.
 No, this disgraceful wound, I once endur'd,
 Shall ne'er re-enter this offended breast.
 I banish the low thought: a woman rule me!
 No, I'll forget her, will not see her, Ostar.
 Let her at leisure mourn her foolish scorn;
 Enquire not of her, I forbid thy search.

Ost. Here more important cares call out upon us.

Geng. Yes, I reflect too deeply on these errors.

S C E N E II.

Gengis, Ostar, Osman.

Osman. The sacrifice, my liege, was just prepar'd.
 And the guards rang'd in order all around;
 But an event, which I expected not,
 Demand new orders, and suspends his fate:
 A woman all distract, and bath'd in tears,
 Came raving to the guard with out-stretch'd arms;
 And pierc'd our ears with her alarming cries.
Stop, 'tis my son you would assassinate:
'Tis my son; they deceive you in the victim.
 The black despair that spoke within her eyes,
 Her face, her voice, her cries and exclamations,
 Her rage, intrepid in the midst of grief,
 Were the plain marks of nature and a mother.
 But then, at our command, appear'd her husband,
 Not less distress'd and wretched than herself,
 But dark, and all collected in his grief:
 You have, he cried, the last of all our kings,
 Strike, that's the child whose blood was your demand.
 His eyes, while thus he spoke, ran o'er with tears:
 The woman, struck with horror at his words,
 Long time remain'd without speech, life, or motion;
 But she no sooner felt returning life,
 Than, O my son! restore my son! she cry'd.

Griefs

Griefs so sincere were never counterfeit,
Such bitter tears delusion never shed.
Doubt and confusion overwhelm'd us all,
And here I came to know your dread commands.

Geng. I shall discover this weak artifice,
And who deceives me surely feels my vengeance :
What ? would this race of slaves delude their lord ?
And must their blood begin to stream again ?

Off. This woman cannot baffle your high prudence.
The emp'ror's infant offspring was her care ;
Fond of her master's children, love and grief
And fond enthusiasm equals nature.
Her grief so unaffected aids th' imposture :
But soon discovering her hidden purpose,
This cloud of darkness shall clear up before you.

Geng. What is this woman ?

Off. Wife, they say, my lord,
To a grave chief, one of those letter'd sages
All Asia treats with rev'rence and respect ;
Who proud of th' honours of their sacred laws,
Upon their vain tribunal dar'd to brave
A hundred kings. Their croud's innumerable ;
But now they're all in chains, and own the force
Of laws more sovereign. This haughty slave
Is Zamti call'd, who o'er the infant watch'd
Due to the sacrifice.

Geng. Examine them,
And make this guilty pair confess the truth.
Moreover let our guards, their post preserv'd,
Watch, where our prudent caution lately plac'd them.
Let none escape : they talk of a surprise,
And some attempt from Corea. Soldiers too
Upon the river-banks have late been seen.
See, if these wretches will provoke their fate,
And rouse the sleeping lion from his den :
See, if while earth owns Gengis for its lord,
The rebel world must groan beneath his sword.

End of the Second A C T.

A C T



A C T III. S C E N E I.

Gengis, Ofman, *Guards.*

Geng. **H**AVE they cleared up the imposture of these slaves?

Their crime detected, and reveng'd my wrongs?

Say, is this phantom of a prince, their care,

Restor'd at last to Ostar?

Ofm. All's confusion.

This steady Mandarin at sight of torture,

Persisted in his answer undismay'd,

And seem'd upon his brow to carry truth.

His trembling wife by tears alone replied,

Still fairer, and more beautiful in grief.

Spite of our manly spirit, our rough souls

Were soften'd into pity: never ought

So beauteous struck our sight. This hapless fair

Demands to throw her at your highness' feet.

"Let the great conqueror of kings but hear me!

"Let him protect an infant's innocence!

"Even in his anger I will hope for mercy;

"Since he's all-powerful he will be noble.

"Can he refuse the cries of the unhappy?"

'Tis thus she spoke; and I would fain have promis'd

Than you'd admit her to your royal presence.

Geng. Yes, I will know what means this mystery.

[*To his train.*]

Let her come; go, and strait conduct her hither.

Let her not think by whinings and complainings,

By deep fetch'd sighs, and some few idle drops,

To blind the eyes of caution or revenge.

The women of this place can ne'er abuse me:

Too well, alas! I know their faithless tears,

And my firm heart hath long been steel'd against them.

She seeks a boon on which her fate depends.

And

And if she tries to practise on my faith,
She meets with certain death.

Ofm. My lord, she comes.

Geng. What do I see ! is't possible ? O heaven !
Do I not dream ? and is't not all delusion ?
'Tis Idame ; 'tis she, and my rapt soul —

S C E N E II.

Gengis, Idame, Ostar, Ofman, Guards.

Ida. Kill, kill, my lord, a most unhappy woman !
Revenge is all your own, and I expect it,
But, O preserve from death a guiltless child !

Geng. Take comfort madam ; lay these fears aside—
I am amaz'd, I own, as well as you —
Fortune, that governs all, deceiv'd us both,
And much the times are chang'd. But tho' high heaven,
Of a rough Scythian, whom you lately scorn'd,
Has made the conqueror of subject Asia,
Be not dismay'd. Your emperor forgets
Th' affronts which here were thrown on Temugin.
This last remainder of a hostile race,
To vict'ry and my throne I sacrifice.
The quiet of the state demands his life,
And he must fall a victim. But the death
Of your own child you need not fear : myself
From danger will protect him.

Ida. O misfortune !

Geng. But of the truth I must be satisfied :
With what delusion they would blind my rage,
And how yourself and husband would deceive me.

Ida. O pity the distresses of the wretched !

Geng. You know I ought to hate this rash offender.

Ida. Hate him ! my lord.

Geng. I've said too much.

Ida. Restore,

O quick restore the infant to my arms !

You've promis'd me, and have pronounc'd his safety.

Geng. His safety's in your hands : my glory's scorn'd,
My orders all condemn'd, and power disgrac'd :

You

You know the full extent of all my wrongs.
 To take away the victim to my rage,
 To disobey my sovereign command
 Is poor offence, to all my former wrongs.
 'Tis not the insult of to-day alone
 That justifies my rage. Your husband—husband!
 Hell! hell! that name alone demands my vengeance.
 What is this husband, that beneath his sway
 Could bend your captive heart? what is this slave
 That thinks to brave my fury? Let him come.

Ida. My virtuous husband, now the wretched cause
 Of all my grief, has serv'd his God and king.
 With honest love, and I was happy in him.

Geng. In him?—when did you form this curst alliance?

Ida. While far from our blest walls, your prosp'rous
 Remotest nations to your arms subdued. (fate

Geng. Ay, in that day that Gengis was despis'd;
 That day, that calls for vengeance on you both,
 And bids me China with my hate pursue.

S C E N E III.

Gengis, Ostar, Osman, *on one side.*

Idame, Zamti, *on the other,* Guards.

Geng. Speak! are my sovereign commands obey'd?
 Hast thou resign'd the son o'th' emperor?

Zam. I have fulfill'd my duty: it is done.

Geng. You know that I can punish fraud and insolence;
 You know that nothing can escape my rage;
 That if the royal infant you've conceal'd,
 Spite of your artifice he'll soon be found,
 And death alone shall answer for your crime.

[*To his guards.*

But I'll believe you: go and seize the child
 This slave has render'd up a sacrifice.
 Kill him.

Zam. Unhappy father!

Ida. Stay, barbarians!

Ah! my good lord, is this then your compassion,
 And is it thus a conqu'ror keeps his word?

Geng. Is't thus I am abused, and fool'd by slaves?
 It is too much: hear now my last resolve.

Tell me this moment what this infant is,
Inform me the whole truth, or else he dies.

Ida. My son prevails; and if this sad confession
Which nature tears from my afflicted soul
Appears a new offence; and if for blood
Your soul still thirsts, strike here: for worse than death
Already racks my breast. Strike here, but save,
O save the generous, the noble Zamti!
It is too true that our most royal master,
Who, but for Gengis, might have still surviv'd,
Committed to our care that sacred charge,
Honour'd by all but thee. Too many horrors
Follow'd your victory, too much, alas!
Has savage cruelty eclips'd your fame.
So many innocents all plung'd in blood,
The emp'rор and his queen, and five sons slain,
This mighty empire by the sword laid waste,—
Could not so much of carnage glut your rage?
A stern barbarian came to ask the child,
That dearest pledge committed to our care,
Son of so many kings, our only hope.
My husband, at this cruel order, still retained
His faith inviolate, nor swerv'd from duty.
He gave up his own son. His tortur'd soul
The agonies of nature shook in vain;
In vain affection pleaded for a son.
You never should have known this fatal secret;
I should have more admir'd his noble firmness;
I should have copied it: but I'm a mother.
My soul could not sustain the cruel conflict,
And for a sacrifice resign my son.
Alas! my grief and violent despair
Too plainly spoke the weakness of a mother.
There stands the hapless father of the child,
Whose virtues were his only crimes. O spare
The babe, whose innocence could ne'er offend,
And spare the father, whose offence was virtue.
Me, punish me; who have at once betray'd
My husband and my king. O noble Zamti,
Thrice worthy all my love and admiration,

Forgive

Forgive the weakness of maternal love.
If you die, so will I. At least forgive
That I from slaughter have preserv'd your son,

Zam. I forgive all: no more will I complain:
For my king's son I have no more to fear.
He's plac'd in safety.

Geng. Traitor, slave, he is not.
Or bring him, villain, or your abject life
Shall answer for your crime.

Zam. My crime? it were
Indeed a crime, if I obey'd these orders.
The sov'reign voice of my right noble masters
Speaks from the grave more loud than thy command.
You are my conqueror, but not my king.
If I ow'd you a subject's faith, to you
I would be faithful. Take my life, but still
Respect my zeal. I gave you up my son;
I could resign my dearest child a victim:
Can you then think I tremble for my life?

Geng. Away with him.

Ida. O hear me!—

Geng. Drag him hence.

Ida. On me, on me vent all your rage. O heav'n!
Could I have thought that by your cruel hand
I e'er should lose a king, a son, and husband?
What! will soft pity never touch your soul? (you:

Geng. Go, follow him to whom your fate has bound
Follow your husband. Tears shall never move me,
Nor keen reproaches melt me to compassion.

Ida. This I foresaw: now all my hopes are flown.

Geng. Go, Idame: if in my own despight
Pity again should enter my weak heart,
You know the wrongs which must be satisfied.

S C E N E IV.

Gengis, Oclar.

Geng. Whence come these sighs? these doubtings
whence? what God
Spoke in her, and maintain'd her sinking cause?
Is there a pow'r in virtue or in beauty
Above my high authority? ah! Oclar,

Stay! for I fear, I tremble for myself:

I want a friend; my weak soul needs support.

Oct. Since I must speak, receive my honest counsel:

If you would sacrifice this hostile race,

If the last branches from the wither'd trunk

You would lop off, delay not your revenge.

The cruel rigour of those bloody deeds,

Which must support a throne by conquest gain'd.

Should fall immediate; rapid, sure, and quick.

The bloody stream in torrents should descend.

Time restores peace and order; reconciles

The people to their fate; and wipes away

The bloody traces of their former woes.

They soon forgive, and ev'n forget their wrongs.

But when the blood's drawn from them drop by drop,

When the wound slowly clos'd, is soon again

Torn open by the hand of violence,

When slaughter seems to shape his course anew,

Then fierce despair stirs up to deeds of rage

Their coward souls, and makes a feeble race

A race of stubborn potent adversaries;

More dangerous, the more they are subdued.

Geng. But then this Idame! this haughty woman!

Wife to a slave that braves me in my anger!

Oct. You owe her no compassion, but revenge.

Your love for her, you own, was idle passion,

Of a light transient flame the hasty sparks:

Her foolish scorn, her anger and the time,

Have in your breast its weak remains extinguish'd.

She's in your eyes a guilty wretch, the wife

Of a low criminal.

Geng. He shall be punish'd:

I should, I will have vengeance. Pity him!

What! spare a slave I hate! that braves me too!

My rival!

Oct. Why is not his death pronounc'd?

You have him in your power, and yet he lives.

Geng. Just heav'n! is't come to this? and does my heart,

Subdued by beauty, and disarm'd by tears,

Forego its rage, heave shameful sighs, and feel,

Th'

Th' alarms of love? I rival to a slave!
 A happy slave! and yet permit him to live;
 Yet know she doats upon him! Ah! I feel
 Respect for Idame ev'n in her husband:
 I fear to plunge the dagger in his breast,
 Lest the dire stroke should wound her bosom too.
 Is it then true I love? is't I that sigh?
 What is then love that has such sov'reign pow'r?

Off. I've only learnt to fight and to obey.
 My cars, my steeds, my arrows and my quiver,
 These are my only passions, only science;
 To this capriciousness of soul a stranger.
 I only know of victory and plunder;
 That captives always to the victors yield.
 This melting softness, to our race unknown,
 Belies your fortune and your character.
 What is't to you that one more slave attends
 In bitterness of soul your dread decree?

Geng. I am aware how far my power extends:
 I may too well I know, use violence.
 But O! what cruel, what imbitter'd joy,
 To force a heart that renders not itself!
 To see those eyes that should be lighted up
 With transport, sunk beneath a cloud of tears!
 And to possess a slave who views your love
 With horror, and the agonies of grief!
 The monsters of the forests we inhabit,
 See happier days, and know less barb'rous loves.
 Spite of myself, my anger, and revenge,
 The lovely Idame subdued my soul.
 I tremble that my heart should recollect it.
 I was enrag'd; and yet her soul o'er mine,
 Over my character, and sov'reign will,
 Ruled with a pow'r more absolute and sure,
 Than I received from war, and victory
 Over an hundred kings dethron'd, enslav'd.
 'Twas this enflam'd my rage and indignation:
 But I'll for ever chase her from my heart;
 I will forget her, my sole aim be glory—
 Alas! she comes, she triumphs, and I love.

S C E N E V.

Gengis, Ostar, Ofman.

Geng. The news ? what says she ? what does she resolve ?*Ofm.* Sooner to perish at her husband's side,
Than to discover where the child's conceal'd.
They swear to meet unmov'd the worst of deaths.
Her husband holds her trembling in his arms,
Supports her constancy, and steels her soul.Thus let us die together, cry they ; while around
The people weep, and seem to shake with horror.*Geng.* Does Idame demand her death of me ?
Ah ! bid her be of comfort ; let her know
Each minute of her life is precious to me.
Enough : go, fly !

S C E N E VI.

Gengis, Ostar.

Of. What orders do you give
Touching this infant they conceal from vengeance !*Geng.* Any.*Of.* You should command your faithful guards
To force the infant e'en from Idame.*Geng.* O hurt not Idame : but haste, good Ostar,
To make her haughty husband know my pow'r.
This infant's blood were poor and low revenge,
My rage demands a nobler sacrifice.*Of.* Zamti ?*Geng.* Ay, Zamti.*Of.* Oh ! beware, my lord ;
Nor let a thought so mean debase your soul.
Would you new firmness add to his despair ?*Geng.* I would preserve my Idame : the rest
I leave to thee. Away !*Of.* What would you do ?
What is your hope ?*Geng.* To talk with her again,
To see her, love her, and of her be lov'd ;
Or else to be reveng'd, and give her death——

Alas !

Alas ! you see the weakness of my heart :
 Spite of my haughty soul, weak passion's slave
 I threaten, love, despair, and madly rave.

End of the Third A C T.



A C T IV. S C E N E I.

Gengis, and Guards.

Geng. **A**ND is it thus that happiness and peace,
 The aim of all my labours fly my search !
 Ah ! now I feel the heavy cares of power.
 To the sad business of my tortur'd heart
 I cannot give an hour. O Idame !
 For thee I wish ; yet round me nought behold
 But surly warriors and an irksome train. [*To his train.*
 Go take your station near the city walls,
 Lest haughty Corea's troops attempt surprize.
 They have proclaim'd this infant, emperor ;
 And with his forfeit head I'll march against them.
 For the last time tell Zamti to obey ;
 I have too long delay'd this child's destruction.

[*He remains alone.*]

Away. Their diligence is tedious now,
 When other cares take up my soul. Alas !
 To awe the vanquish'd and the victors rule,
 To foresee dangers, half-form'd plots to crush,
 And all the cruel business of a king,
 Falls heavy on my heart with foreign woes
 And other cares perplexed. — O happier far
 My humble fortune, abject and unknown !

S C E N E II.

Gengis, Ostar.

Geng. Well, hast thou seen this stubborn Mandarin ?
 Ostar. No fear or danger moves him from his purpose.
 My lord, I blush'd to parley in your name

With

With a vile slave whom you should sacrifice.
 He view'd the torture with indifference,
 And talk'd of duty to his king, and justice :
 He braves his vanquishers ; as if his voice
 Prescrib'd them laws. Him and his rebel wife
 At once destroy, nor languish for a slave.
 Punish the hated pair, whose insolence
 Affronts that power, which all the world obeys.

Geng. Amazement ! what a people have I conquer'd !
 Whence are they ? whence these elevated thoughts,
 This native grandeur of the noble soul,
 Which we in our rough climes ne'er felt or knew ?
 To a king dead, each sacrificing nature,
 One without murmur sees his son destroy'd,
 The other for a husband asks to die :
 Nothing can shake them, nothing move their fear.
 Whence, whence is this ? with steady reason's eye,
 When fall'n, enslav'd, this people I survey,
 Though conqueror, my captives I revere,
 And praise their virtues, while I give them chains,
 I see their labours have adorn'd the world ;
 I see them an industrious, noble people ;
 Their kings on wisdom's basis built their power,
 To all the neighbour nations giving laws,
 And reigning without conquest or the sword.
 Heav'n has allotted us rude force alone ;
 Battles our arts, and all our labours death.
 Ah ! what avails so much success in war ?
 Or what the glories of a world enslav'd ?
 We made the car of conquest red with blood :
 Yet there's a greater fame, a nobler glory.
 I'm jealous of their virtue, blush to see
 The conquer'd soar above the conqueror.

Off. Can Gengis such a feeble race admire ?
 What boots their puny arts, that cannot save
 The practisers from slavery or death ?
 The weak should serve the strong. All earth must yield
 To toil and valour. Why then stain your power
 By insults unreveng'd, and suffer slaves
 To brave their conqueror ? why, when lord of all,

Sub.

Submit to bonds, to our brave race unknown?
 And draw upon yourself reproach from those
 Whose arms have made you monarch of the world?
 Shall then the brave companions of your labours
 See all those victories effac'd by love?
 They blush at the mean thought, their souls disdains it;
 And by my voice their clamours reach your ears.
 In theirs, as the state's name, I call upon you.
 Pardon a Tartar, pardon a rough soldier,
 Grown grey in armour worn in your defence;
 Who cannot see you a mean slave to love,
 But presents glory to your dazled eyes.

Geng. Let them seek Idame.

Ost. You would——

Geng. Obey.

Seek her. Your zeal grows troublesome and bold.
 My subjects ev'n my frailties shall revere.

S C E N E III.

Gengis solus.

Fate will not be oppos'd; and doubtless heav'n
 Destines her for me.—What avails my greatness?
 I have made wretches, and myself am wretched.
 Of all the savages that fill my train,
 Greedy of combat, prodigal of blood,
 Has ever one spoke words of comfort to me,
 Or sooth'd the anguish of my aching soul?
 Have all these states enslaved e'er given my breast
 One hour of peace? Ah! no: my wearied soul
 Still sought some pleasing error, to disperse
 The gloomy night of care, and to afford
 Some consolation on the throne of empire.
 Ostar has shock'd me with his horrid counsel.
 I am environ'd with a bloody train
 Of fell assassins, disciplin'd to death,
 And form'd for ravage; born alone for war,
 And shocking to a soul, refin'd by love.
 Let them fight for me, follow me to death,
 But never dare my actions to arraign.
 Where is my Idame?—'Tis she; she comes.

SCENE

S C E N E IV.

Gengis, Idame.

Ida. Are then my griefs your sport? and am I call'd
To be receiv'd with scorn? O spare a woman,
Nor add new anguish to a mother's woes!

Geng. Be not dismay'd. Your husband may atone
His past offence, and still receive our pardon.
I have already bid my vengeance sleep,
And you alone could move my heart to mercy.
Perhaps 'tis not without high heav'n's decree,
That fortune has conducted me to you,
For surely Idame was form'd by fate,
To make a conqu'ror stoop, enslave a master,
And melt in me that stubbornness of soul,
The rough distinction of my native clime.
Then be advis'd, and mark me well: I reign
Within these walls, yet you may reassume
Dominion o'er me, though perhaps your scorn
Might rather warrant fury and revenge.
Our law permits divorce; submit to that,
And make the conqu'ror of the world your slave.
If he is odious, yet a throne has charms,
And royal wreaths may wipe your tears away.
The int'rest of the state and of the city
Forbid you to refuse my proffer'd love.
Of love to parley now, may move your wonder:
The man who overturn'd your monarch's throne,
And all your kings has mingled with the dust,
Was scarce expected, while his furious arm
Was dealing death, again to fall before you.
But you was robb'd of your too easy heart,
And a base rival has usurp'd my place.
You owe it to the conqu'ror of mankind,
Who now with twenty sceptres is return'd,
To claim that love, once due to Temugin.
You fix your eyes on earth, nor can I guess
What you resolve. Forget my pow'r, forget
My fierceness, well reflect, and freely speak.

Ida.

Ida, Still to new changes every hour condemn'd,
 Yet I confess that you have mov'd my wonder.
 But if I can recal my scatter'd spirits
 My answer shall amaze you more. That time
 You may remember, and that humble life,
 In which heav'n once obscur'd your future fame.
 You was not then the terror of the world,
 But lowly Temugin: whole nations then
 Bow'd not beneath your sovereign command.
 Then, when your hand was pure, 'twas proffer'd to me,
 And know, that then I would not have refus'd it.

Geng. What do I hear? O heaven! and did you love
 Did you. (me?)

Ida. I own, against your sighs and vows
 My subject soul would never have rebell'd,
 Had not the virtuous pair, that gave me life,
 Resign'd its duty to another lord.
 The pow'r of parents over us, you know:
 They are the image of the God we serve,
 And we for ever owe obedience to them.
 This fallen empire, on parental right
 Was founded, on the solemn marriage faith,
 On honour, justice, and respect of oaths:
 On these 'twas built; and though beneath your arms
 It sink for ever, yet the noble spirit
 Which taught us these, shall never, never die.
 Your fortunes are much chang'd, but mine remain
 Unalter'd, and the same.

Geng. And did you love me?

Ida. What though I did? that very love were now
 A threefold bar against our union,
 Another reason I should now refuse you.
 My marriage-bonds by heav'n itself were form'd;
 My husband sacred; to say more, I love him.
 Before yourself, your throne, and all its greatness
 I would prefer him. O forgive this warmth
 That flows from honest love; nor think I boast
 My conquest o'er your heart, or mean to brave
 Your anger, or take a pride in these denials,
 Which rise alone from justice and my duty.

I sigh

I sigh not for a throne; some other fair
 Make happy with your sceptre and your love,
 Withdrawn from me, who know not how to prize them:
 And, O let me beseech with earnest pray'r,
 That Zamti know not of your proffer'd love.
 He'll be less proud o'th' triumph, than enrag'd
 At this new outrage offer'd to my faith.

Geng. Concerning him my firm resolve you know,
 And he'll obey if life is precious to him.

Ida. He will not do't, he never can obey:
 And if the cruel agonies of torture
 Could shake his soul from its integrity,
 My faith and duty should sustain his weakness.
 I would support his fainting heart, and plead
 Those sacred bonds his baseness would dishonour.

Geng. What do I hear? can I believe it? gods!
 Can you thus love him after what has pass'd,
 When the barbarian husband would have giv'n
 Your child to certain death?

Ida. Barbarian husband?
 'Twas virtue in him; I admire him for it,
 Though I felt all the weakness of a mother.
 And was I so unjust to hate him for it,
 My pride would not permit me to desert him.

Geng. Still all you say amazes, and distracts me;
 Those virtues I adore, I wish to hate.
 I love you more, the more you scorn my love,
 At once you make my heart a slave, and rebel.
 Fear me: for know, that spite of all my love,
 My fury may outstrip my tenderness.

Ida. I know your pow'r, and that you may exact
 Death, or obedience to your dread command.
 Yet the laws live, and are above you still.

Geng. The laws! what laws dare contradict my will?
 Here are no laws, but such as I impose:
 I, a rough Scythian, your king, your conqueror.
 The laws you follow have been fatal to me.
 Yes, when, e'er while our fortunes here were equal,
 Our thoughts, our hearts were mutually inclin'd,
 (For spite of all your scorn I now believe it)

When

When all united us, those laws I hate
 Ordain'd my shame, and your accursed marriage.
 I make them void ; I speak, and they're annull'd ;
 Thou, with the subject universe, obey.
 Those manners, usages, and laws you boast,
 Are criminal, if they oppose my will.
 I've order'd it ; your husband must resign
 Into my hands, your emperor and you.
 Their lives shall be the pledge of your obedience.
 Think on't, you know how far I may revenge :
 Think at what price you may appease a king,
 Who loves you and yet blushes at his passion.

S C E N E V.

Idame, Affeli.

Ida. Or death or infamy—no other choice—
 O royal infant ! O my dearest husband !
 When in my hands I hold your destiny,
 My voice without one doubt pronounces death.

Aff. Ah ! rather re-assume that pow'r, which heav'n
 Has given to virtuous beauty : re-assume
 That pow'r, which makes this Scythian bend before you,
 And own your influence. A word sometimes
 Can soften anger, and disarm fierce rage.

Try ; they can do ev'ry thing, who know to please.

Ida. That I have pleas'd, is now my greatest grief.

Aff. Yet that alone can give the vanquish'd rest.

In our calamities the bounteous heavens
 Have you ordain'd to check the tyrant's rage.
 You saw how soon his irritated soul
 Lost all its fierceness, and was hush'd to peace ;
 Else long ago in Zamti he had destroy'd
 A hated rival : Zamti brav'd his rage,
 And yet he lives ; he lives too unremov'd
 From you his wife ; they tender you in him.
 This conqueror, though he has laid waste the world,
 Still honours you ; you may remember too
 That he first wrought upon your virgin heart :
 His passion formerly was pure and lawful. (on't.

Ida. Peace ; say no more ; 'tis baseness but to thin

D

S C E N E

S C E N E VI.

Zamti, Idame, Affeli.

Ida. Am I then still, 'mid all your woes your wife?
And are we still permitted thus to meet?

Zam. Permitted? 'tis the tyrant's sov'reign order;
And to his rage I owe this happy moment.

Ida. Have they inform'd you at what horrid price
The tyrant would grant your's and TH' ORPHAN's life?

Zam. O mention not, consider not my life:
A single citizen's a trivial loss.
Forgive it then: but, O remember, Idame,
That 'tis our duty to preserve our king.
To him our lives and services we owe,
And ev'n the blood of children born to serve him;
But owe him not the forfeit of our honour.
Yet certain death awaits the hapless ORPHAN.
Whom I've secreted in the dark asylum,
Where all our ancient monarchs are intomb'd;
And where, unless we can afford him aid,
He'll with his fathers share the sleep of death.
In vain the generous prince of Corea,
Waits the dear charge, my zeal has promis'd him.
Etan, the faithful-guardian of his life,
Loaded with chains, my cruel lot partakes.
You are the ORPHAN's only refuge left.
'Tis you alone that must his threaten'd life,
Your son, your glory, and my honour save.
We will obey our tyrant's dread commands:
I'll give them up my son: I'll give up more.
Freed by my death, go, soothe the ruffian Tartar:
Pass o'er my grave to this barbarian's arms,
Yet now I first behold grim death with horror,
Since it abandons you to this usurper.
But my king asks it, and I expiate
By my just death this impious sacrifice.
Wed, with this horrid auspices, the tyrant,
And, with a mother's care still guard your king.
Reign, that your king may live, and husband die.
Reign at this price. It shall be so——.

Ida. O hold!

Do you then know me? think you; I would buy
 A throne with shame, my Zamti, and thy death?
 Or do you think I'm less a wife than mother?
 Alas! you dream, and your too rigid virtue
 Twice in one day hath sinn'd against itself,
 Scorning the cries of nature and of love.
 Ah! cruel to your son, to me more cruel,
 Do you forget that I'm your wife, and love you?
 All-righteous heav'n has better taught my soul;
 I'll save my king, yet not dishonour you.
 The tyrant, be it love, or be it scorn,
 Constrains me not, nor watches my designs.
 Within those walls, with bloody gore o'erflow'd,
 I still am free, nor are my steps observ'd.
 The prince of Corea by the secret path
 May reach the tombs, wherein this precious charge
 From the destroyer's eye now lies conceal'd.
 I know each winding passage of the place;
 I fly to give him timely nourishment,
 To render him to China's faithful friends,
 Within my arms among their warlike ranks
 To carry him, a gift from heav'n, their aid.
 That you must die; I know, but full of glory,
 Our memory shall ever be rever'd.
 When equal to the noblest we shall rise,
 O judge, if Idame has stain'd your fame!
Zam. Heaven! that inspirest, with thy arm sustain her!
 O Idame! thy virtues o'ertop mine.
 Haply for thee from ruin heav'n may save
 Thy country, and thy monarch from the grave.

End of the Fourth A C T.



A C T V. S C E N E I.

Idame, Affeli.

Aff. **H**OW? is all lost? are all our hopes then fled?
 And are you still a captive and a slave?
 Alas! 'twere better not to have incens'd

D 2

This

This conqueror. What could a feeble woman,
A helpless child, against such force and pow'r
In vain opposing weakness?

Ida. Now all's o'er.

I've done my duty, strove with vain attempt
To wrestle with my fate: It will not be.
I am again a slave, and doom'd to wear
The tyrant's chains.

Aff. Again the hapless ORPHAN
Becomes his prey, and dies as soon as born;
And Zamti must partake the infant's fate.

Ida. The hour of both approaches: if their death
Is yet delay'd, 'tis only to prepare
More grievous torments for them. My dear son
Perhaps must follow them. The haughty victor
Call'd me before him, to increase my woes.
His very looks shot terror and dismay:
Full oft he rais'd his arm, all red with blood,
Against the ORPHAN, and my hapless son.
I all in tears fell prostrate at his feet,
And lay 'tween him and th' objects of his rage:
But he with roughness threw me from before him,
And with dire threats and angry looks departed,
'Then soon again return'd still more enrag'd:
Now cry'd for vengeance, now delay'd his purpose,
While round him stood a train of savage warriors,
Who seem'd to ask his orders for my death.

Aff. Gengis would never give such horrid orders:
Your husband, whom he hates, still lives; the ORPHAN
To th' hand of slaughter is not yet resign'd.
Ask but for pardon, all will be forgiven.

Ida. No, all his furious love is turn'd to rage,
Oh! had you seen him double my distress,
Swear his fixt hate, and mock me in my tears!—

Aff. This rage, a word, a tear from you abates.
This conquer'd lion, that roars thus in his chain,
Did he not love, would never threaten hate.

Ida. Or love or hate, 'tis time to end that life
Which without horror I cannot preserve.

Aff. Ah! what do you resolve?

Ida.

Ida. When angry heav'n
Has fill'd the measure of our miseries,
It oft supports us in the blackest grief,
And gives us courage equal to our woes.
Amid the horrors of the present hour
I feel my soul with unknown strength dilate;
I fear no more this conqu'ror of mankind;
But on myself alone my fate depends

Aff. But then this son, this object of your fears,
Will you abandon him?

Ida. Ah! there you touch
My tenderest part, you pierce me to the soul.
O horrid sacrifice! does ought remain
That can be done to save him from destruction?
Perhaps the tyrant, proud in his success,
By kings encircled humbled to the dust,
Amid the crowd of wretches in his train,
Will not reflect on my unhappy child:
Or see perhaps with aspect less severe
The guiltless child, whose mother once he lov'd.
In that one hope I rest; the soothing thought
Flatters my soul in death. If me he lov'd,
He will not hate my ashes; when I'm dead,
He'll not pursue my son.

S C E N E II.

Idame, Affeli, Ostar.

Ost. Stay, *Idame*;
Here wait the emperor. [*To his train.*] Guards, watch
those infants;

See, that none enter here, none hence depart.

Do you retire.

[*To Affeli.*]

Ida. Will the emperor
See me again? I must obey; yet wish
That with my husband I might first confer.
Perhaps the conqueror, his rage appeas'd
Will render justice to a hapless pair.
Alas! I see that my request is vain,
And conquest is with you inexorable.
Is then compassion in your climes unknown?

And may I not your friendly voice implore ?

Off. When th' emperor has spoke, to implore's a crime.
You are not now beneath your ancient kings,
Who could abate the rigour of their laws :
The sword reigns now ; nor pray'rs, nor tears we know.
He speaks, and all earth trembles and obeys.
Stay, and attend the order of the emperor.

S C E N E III.

Idame, sola.

GOD of the wretched ! who behold'st my woes,
Amid these horrors, O support my soul !
O give me firmness ! pour into my bosom
The virtues of the husband you have giv'n me !

S C E N E IV.

Gengis, Idame.

Geng. No, I have not enough display'd my rage,
Enough made humble your rash haughtiness,
Enough reproach'd the baseness of that heart,
Which answers mercy with ingratitude.

You do not see the height of your offending,
Nor think on what a dreadful point you stand,
Nor know the horror that inspires my breast :
You, whom I've madly lov'd, but ought to hate ;
You, who've betray'd me, and I ought to punish ?

Ida. Punish me : but, O punish me alone !
The only boon I ask of my destroyer,
Whose flinty heart, nor pray'rs, nor tears can melt.
Ah, quench your rage, and fierceness in my blood !
Destroy a woman faithful to her duty ;
And let her torments end.

Geng. Ah ! no, I cannot.
Too cruel Idame ? O could I end
The tortures more severe that rack my soul !
I came to punish ; and can pardon all.
Pardon !——I pardon you !——no, fear my vengeance.
Your monarch's son, and yours are in my power.
I mention not that abject slave your husband,
Your love is cause enough that he should die.
He has betray'd me, brav'd me, been a rebel,

And

And merited ten thousand deaths. Your pray'rs
Have stay'd that arm, that should fall heavy on him.
Ev'n to this hour the traitor lives. But now
No more will I implore my slave, my captive.
Forget him, or he dies. Your stubborn heart
Has now no mean pretext to screen its purpose :
He is no more your husband, now condemn'd.
Yes, he shall fall ; for ever break the chain
That binds him to you, by a shameful death.
'Tis you constrain it : you, that faithful wife
With idle scruples seal your husband's death.
I know, I might, all cover'd with his blood,
Force you to submit, and grant my utmost wish.
But know this savage Scythian, this destroyer,
Has sentiments as noble as your own.
Fate, Idame, designs us for each other,
And my soul longs for gentle sway o'er thine.
Abjure your marriage ; and that very hour
Your son shall rank as mine. On your decree
The destiny of more than one depends :
Of your king's son, now doom'd full soon to die,
And of your husband, whom your voice may save.
His son's fate, your's, nay mine itself, on you
Depends ; for Gengis loves you, doats upon you.
And yet beware that you oppose me not,
Insult not the fond weakness of my soul,
For even now rage chids my tenderness,
And threatens danger, while I talk of love.
Tremble at my love, my very kindness fear.
My soul is too familiar with revenge,
And I shall punish you, because I've lov'd,
Forgive me ; for I rave, and then, alas !
I threaten most, when most I would implore.
O, soothe to peace this conflict of my soul !
One word from you this empire's fate decrees.
But this important word you must pronounce,
O, quick pronounce it ! and inform my heart,
If it must burn with love, or hatred tow'rd's you.

Ida. Nor love nor hatred should inflame it now.
Your love's unworthy both of you and me :

You

You owe me justice: if you are a king,
I will demand it, ev'n against yourself.
I do not mean to brave your sov'reign pow'r;
But rather grace and dignify your greatness,
And you in secret must applaud me for it.

Geng. 'Tis well: you chuse my hate then: and shall
My bosom pants already for revenge. [have it.

I know you not; and wrathful indignation
Awakes the cruelty that slept within me.
Your prince, your husband, and your infant son,
Shall answer with their blood your rebel scorn.
Gengis condemns, but Idame's the cause,

Ida. Barbarian!

Geng. 'Tis resolv'd; they are no more:
Your sometime lover's now an angry master;
A bloody, merciless, fierce enemy,
Whose hatred rises equal to your scorn.

Ida. I fall then at this angry master's feet,
Whom heav'n has made my king; and on my knees
Implore him to comply with one request.

Geng. Cruel! rise Idame: I'm all attention.
O! could I tell my soul you would relent!
What would you? speak.

Ida. That Gengis would permit
My husband to confer with me in secret:

Geng. Your husband to confer——

Ida. Deny me not:

This conference shall be our last; that o'er,
You better shall interpret my resistance.

Geng. No, 'twere not meet you should consult with him:
Yet I'll permit this interview. Perhaps
His haughty soul hath better learnt its duty,
And taught him to forego the fatal honour
Of rivalling the conqu'ror of mankind.
He hid his prince, when I in fury sought him;
He has possess'd my Idame. What crimes!
And yet he lives, is pardon'd, if you ask it.
You fix his fate; his death, or his divorce.
Yes, he shall see you. Ostar, watch this gate.
Alas! what doubts perplex my tortur'd soul!

O!

O! shall I yet be happy in her love?

Ida. [Sola.] I feel new spirits glow within my breast,
That constancy I doubted of till now.

S C E N E V.

Zamti, Idame.

Ida. O thou, whom next to heaven I revere,
Mortal more great and noble in my eyes,
Than all the conqu'rors, men have rais'd to gods;
The horror of our fate too well you know:
Our doom is fixt, and our last hour is come.

Zam. I know it.

Ida. Twice you have try'd with vain attempt
To save the offspring of our hapless kings.

Zam. Ah! think of it no more: all hope is lost.
Fail not in the performance of your duty,
I die in peace,

Ida. What fate attends my son?
Forgive this thought, that flows from my despair;
Forgive my sighs, and think but of my courage.

Zam. Our kings are dead, our country is enslav'd.
To die, is happiness: lament not me,
But, O bewail the wretches doom'd to live.

Ida. They mean you, Zamti, a most shameful death.

Zam. Well, let it come. I wait their savage orders.
They dally with my miseries too long.

Ida. Attend me, Zamti. Cannot we then die
Without a tyrant's order? At the altar
The ox is sacrific'd; the criminal,
Like a vile slave, is dragg'd to punishment;
But the great, Zamti, their own fate determine,
Nor from a haughty master wait their death.
Why, why attend the hour of death from him?
Man was not born for such a base dependence.
No, copy rather the brave constancy
Of our intrepid neighbours. They support
The rights of nature, live while free, but die
Rather than suffer slav'ry or dishonour.
To live disgrac'd is bitter to their souls,
Nor dread they ought so much as infamy.

The

The noble Japanese ne'er meanly waits
A haughty ruler's voice to speak his death.
We have instructed those brave islanders,
Nor let us blush to learn their virtues too;
To learn like them to die.

Zam. O matchless woman!

I praise thy constancy, and sure such woes
May warrant this transgression of our laws.
I had already form'd this noble purpose;
But without arms, slaves, victims, and alone.
There are no means of death but from our tyrants.

Ida. [*Drawing a dagger.*] Slaves! victims!—There
—take this—with me be free;

Strike and deliver us.

Zam. O heaven! with thee?

Ida. Yes, tear this breast, this heart they would dis-
My feeble arm, still traitor to its purpose, (honour.
Could not with steady aim direct the blow.
Do thou with nobler firmness guide its point;
And greatly sacrifice a faithful wife;
Then, cover'd with her blood, beside her fall.
In my last moments I'll embrace my husband,
And Gengis shall with jealousy behold us.

Zam. Yes, Idame, thy virtues stand the trial;
And thou display'st the warmest marks of love.
Thrice worthy wife, this last farewell receive—
The dagger now,—and turn thine eyes aside.

Ida. [*Giving him the dagger.*] There—now strike
here: nay, pause not, nor delay.

Zam. I cannot do't.

Ida. You must.

Zam. O horror!

Ida. Strike:

Strike here, then turn the poinard on yourself.

Zam. Then copy me.

Ida. [*Seizing his arm.*] Here, Zamti, here—

S C E N E VI.

Gengis, Ostar, Idame, Zamti, Guards.

Geng. [*Accompanied by his guards, and disarming Zam.*] Hold,

Hold, hold!

Stay your rash hand! O heav'n! what would you do?

Ida. Deliver ourselves from thee, and end our woes.

Zam. Will you not let us even die in peace?

Geng. O hold!—All-gracious heaven, King of kings!

To whom my soul now lifts itself in pray'r,
Witness of all my wrongs, and all my weakness,
By whom such states and monarchs I've subdued,
Shall I at length grow worthy of my glory?—
You move my anger, Zamti, thus to reign
Over a heart that once felt love for me,
A heart that I adore. Your faithful wife
Had rather fall a sacrifice to duty,
Fall by thy hand, than share a throne with me.
But you shall both endure and own my pow'r,
Perhaps do more.

Ida. What more can vengeance do?

Zam. What new device to add to our afflictions?

Ida. Why, are we not already doom'd to die?

Geng. Your doom'd is fix'd, and you shall know your
You have done justice, I'll do justice too. (fate
What I have now beheld, I scarce believe:
Your firmness I admire, and am your convert.
Upon the throne to which my arms have rais'd me,
I blush to see, how much I fall below you.
In vain by my exploits in war distinguish'd,
I am degraded; and would equal you.
I knew not, the best conquest man could make
Was to subdue himself: to you I owe it.
Rejoice with me that you could change my soul,
I come to re-unite, and to protect you.
Watch, happy husband, o'er the guiltless life
Of your king's son: to your care I resign him.
By right of conquest I might have destroy'd him,
But I lay down that right I late abus'd.
With all a father's care I'll henceforth guard
The ORPHAN and your son. Fear not my faith.
I was but conqueror, you have made me king.

[To Zamti.

Of the laws here, be thou the interpreter;
With ministry right-worthy of thyself.

Teach

Teach reason, justice, and morality.
 The victors let the vanquish'd rule! let wisdom
 Preside o'er courage! triumph o'er rude force,
 That owes you homage! I will give th' example:
 Your sov'reign, all invincible in arms,
 Shall own himself obedient to your laws.

Ida. What do I hear? O Heav'n! can this be true?

Zam. Now, you indeed are worthy of your glory;
 Nor shall your captives groan beneath your yoke.

Ida. What could inspire so noble a design?

Geng. YOUR VIRTUES. These to friendship turn'd
 my hate,

And taught me, **TO BE GOOD, IS TO BE GREAT.**

THE END.

